

Anarchy and Voluntaryism

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By Doug Casey

You're likely aware that I'm a libertarian. But I'm actually more than a libertarian. I don't believe in the right of the State to exist. The reason is that anything that has a monopoly of force is extremely dangerous. As Mao Tse-tung, lately one of the world's leading experts on government, said: "The power of the state comes out of a barrel of a gun."

There are two possible ways for people to relate to each other, either voluntarily or coercively. And the State is pure institutionalized coercion. It's not just unnecessary, but antithetical, for a civilized society. And that's increasingly true as technology advances. It was never moral, but at least it was possible, in oxcart days, for bureaucrats to order things around. Today it's ridiculous.

Everything that needs doing can and will be done by the market, by entrepreneurs who fill the needs of other people for a profit. The State is a dead hand that imposes itself on society. That belief makes me, of course, an anarchist.

People have a misconception about anarchists. That they're these violent people, running around in black capes with little round bombs. This is nonsense. Of course there are violent anarchists. There are violent dentists. There are violent Christians. Violence, however, has nothing to do with anarchism. Anarchism is simply a belief that a ruler isn't necessary, that society organizes itself, that individuals own themselves, and the State is actually counterproductive.

It's always been a battle between the individual and the collective. I'm on the side of the individual.

I simply don't believe anyone has a right to initiate aggression against anyone else. Is that an unreasonable belief?

Let me put it this way. Since government is institutionalized coercion—a very dangerous thing—it should do nothing but protect people in its bailiwick from physical coercion.

What does that imply? It implies a police force to protect you from coercion within its boundaries, an army to protect you from coercion from outsiders, and a court system to allow you to adjudicate disputes without resorting to coercion.

I could live happily with a government that did just those things. Unfortunately the US Government is only marginally competent in providing services in those three areas. Instead, it tries to do everything else.

The argument can be made that the largest criminal entity today is not some Colombian cocaine gang, it's the US Government. And they're far more dangerous. They have a legal monopoly to do anything they want with you. Don't conflate the government with America—it's a separate entity, with its own interests, as distinct as General Motors or the Mafia. I'd rather deal with the Mafia than I would with any agency of the US Government.

Even under the worst circumstances, even if the Mafia controlled the United States, I can't believe Tony Soprano or Al Capone would try to steal 40% of people's income from them every year. They couldn't get away with it. But—perhaps because we're said to be a democracy—the US Government is able to masquerade as “We the People.” That's an anachronism, at best. The US has mutated into a domestic multicultural empire. The average person has been propagandized into believing that it's patriotic to do as he's told. “We have to obey libraries of regulations, and I'm happy to pay my taxes. It's the price we pay for civilization.” No, that's just the opposite of the fact. Those things are a sign that civilization is degrading, that the society is becoming less individually responsible, and has to be held together by force.

It's all about control. Power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely. The type of people that gravitate to government like to control other people. Contrary to what we're told to think, that's why you get the worst people—not the best—who want to get into government.

What about voting? Can that change and improve things? Unlikely. I can give you five reasons why you should not vote in an election ([see this article](#)). See if you agree.

Hark back to the '60s when they said, “Suppose they gave a war and nobody came?” But let's take it further: Suppose they gave a tax and nobody paid? Suppose they gave an election and nobody voted? What that would do is delegitimize government. I applaud the fact that only half of Americans vote. If that number dropped to 25%, 10%, then 0%, perhaps everybody would look around and say, “Wait a minute, none of us believe in this evil charade. I don't like Tweedledee from the left wing of the Demopublican Party any more than I like Tweedledum from its right wing...”

Remember you don't get the best and the brightest going into government. There are two kinds of people. You've got people that like to control physical reality—things. And people that like to control other people. That second group, those who like to lord it over their fellows, are drawn to government and politics.

Some might ask: “Aren't you loyal to America?” and “How can you say these terrible things?” My response is, “Of course I'm loyal to America, but America is an idea, it's not a place. At least not any longer...”

America was once unique among the world's countries. Unfortunately that's no longer the case. The idea is still unique, but the country no longer is.

I'll go further than that. It's said that you're supposed to be loyal to your fellow Americans. Well, here's a revelation. I have less in common with my average fellow American than I do with friends of mine in the Congo, or Argentina, or China. The reason is that I share values with my

friends; we look at the world the same way, have the same worldview. But what do I have in common with my fellow Americans who live in the trailer parks, barrios, and ghettos? Or even Hollywood, Washington, and Manhattan? Everyone has to be judged as an individual, but probably very little besides residing in the same political jurisdiction. Most of them—about 50% of the US—are welfare recipients, and therefore an active threat. So I have more personal loyalty to the guys in the Congo than I do to most of my fellow Americans. The fact we carry US passports is simply an accident of birth.

Those who find that thought offensive likely suffer from a psychological aberration called “nationalism”; in serious cases it may become “jingoism.” The authorities and the general public prefer to call it “patriotism.” It’s understandable, though. Everyone, including the North Koreans, tends to identify with the place they were born. But these things should be fairly low on any list of virtues. Nationalism is the belief that my country is the best country in the world just because I happen to have been born there. It’s most virulent during wars and elections. And it’s very scary. It’s like watching a bunch of chimpanzees hooting and panting at another tribe of chimpanzees across the watering hole. I have no interest in being a part of the charade—although that’s dangerous.

And getting more dangerous as the State grows more powerful. The growth of the State is actually destroying society. Over the last 100 years the State has grown at an exponential rate, and it’s the enemy of the individual. I see no reason why this trend, which has been in motion and accelerating for so long, is going to stop. And certainly no reason why it’s going to reverse.

It’s like a giant snowball that’s been rolling downhill from the top of the mountain. It could have been stopped early in its descent, but now the thing is a behemoth. If you stand in its way you’ll get crushed. It will stop only when it smashes the village at the bottom of the valley.

This makes me quite pessimistic about the future of freedom in the US. As I said, it’s been in a downtrend for many decades. But the events of September 11, 2001, turbocharged the acceleration of the loss of liberty in the US. At some point either foreign or domestic enemies will cause another 9/11, either real or imagined. It’s predictable; that’s what sociopaths, which I discussed earlier, do.

When there is another 9/11—and we will have another one—they’re going to lock down this country like one of their numerous new prisons. I was afraid that the shooting deaths and injuries of several hundred people in Las Vegas on October 1st might be it. But, strangely, the news cycle has driven on, leaving scores of serious unanswered questions in its wake. And about zero public concern.

It’s going to become very unpleasant in the US at some point soon. It seems to me the inevitable is becoming imminent.

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